

THE WORD

WINTER 2023

INCARNATE WORD ACADEMY MAGAZINE







THE WORD

WINTER 2023 | VOL. 18 NO. 1

MISSION

Incarnate Word Academy provides young women with a Catholic college preparatory education, helping them grow in their relationship with Jesus the Incarnate and live according to His values. Our cornerstones are academics, values and spirituality.

LEADERSHIP

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Incarnate Word Academy

609 Crawford St.

Houston, TX 77002

ON THE COVER

Broadcast Journalism instructor Jamie Adams and Katie Bourgeois '23 review production notes as they prep the morning news anchors Anna Galan '23 and Amelie Dinh '23. Photo by Lin Zhao.

PHOTO CREDITS

Lin Zhao, Sue Blackmon and the staff of the Margil yearbook, Kirk Hawkins, Jeopardy Productions Inc.

INSIDE COVER

Mr. Comer's Freshman

Honors Biology students Olivia Tipton, Paloma Aleman, and Elizabeth Carter enjoy a few laughs during a hands-on lesson about the fermentation process, by mixing grapes with yeast.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Parents, Alumnae and Friends of the Academy,

“High energy!”



Those words easily describe the atmosphere around IWA these days. While all students work hard on their academic goals, enjoying classes and making course selections for next year, seniors are over the moon to see that their effort has paid off as they receive their college acceptance letters. Day after day, our students bring home awards in sports, dance, art, and choral. Their production of “The Addams Family” was amazing. The Young Leaders Program does a fabulous job helping students develop strong leadership skills and then putting those skills into practice. I don’t know about you, but when I was in high school I never even thought about starting a business, let alone bringing one to fruition. These students planned and executed a successful business from scratch—creating the concept, financial model, marketing plan, producing and selling the product, and deciding which organization would most benefit from their profit. Now that is servant leadership.

To further our mission, the Board of Advisors and administration are spearheading a new strategic plan to develop a visionary yet practical roadmap for the next four years. The process includes getting input from all of our constituencies – students, parents, alums, and donors. While we can’t survey everyone, we have focus groups pulling in opinions from a wide cross section of our constituencies. Be on the lookout for an invitation to participate in a focus group or a survey. We hope you will take the time to participate in this important endeavor.

Adding to the excitement, we are closer to having a much needed parking garage, in collaboration with Annunciation Catholic Church. To be honest, I never thought much about the looks of a parking garage, until we began designing one. Now I see just how good-looking a garage can be. Don’t you agree?



To top off the excitement, starting with our gala on April 14 at the Post Oak Hotel, we begin our yearlong celebration of our 150th anniversary of our Congregation and the Academy. Please join us for this event. It is sure to be a crowd pleaser.

As a community, we are filled with pride, grateful for God’s ever-present fidelity to us on our journey, sustaining us in our difficult times and blessing us with successes. We marvel at the accomplishments of our current students and the accomplishments of our alumnae, grateful that we have been blessed to be part of their life journeys.

May Jesus, the Incarnate Word, continue to guide the mission of the Academy now and in the future. As always, please know that you and your families are remembered in prayer by the sisters.

Praised be the Incarnate Word,

Sr. Lauren Beck C.V.S.

Sister Lauren



FALCON NEWS

I'LL TAKE AMAZING TEACHER FOR \$1000!

Ever since grade school, IWA's Young Leaders Program Director Eric Kerr-Herally has had a knack for trivia. Growing up, he and his mother were devoted fans of *Jeopardy!* While Alex Trebek grilled contestants they would play along, shouting answers—framed as questions—at their living room TV.

Fast forward to adulthood, and Eric continued to be a big fan, following the game show with his wife, Lauran, who encouraged him to audition to be a contestant. In 2008, he drove to Dallas for auditions, but didn't receive a callback, and in 2019, he tried out when the producers came to The Galleria to find contestants—but again, he didn't hear back.

Once Covid-19 hit the country, *Jeopardy!* transitioned to online auditions. Eric decided that the third time might be a charm—and it was! After taking an online test, he was contacted for a Zoom audition while he and his family were vacationing in Paris. *Doux succes!* “The fact that I auditioned in my Airbnb in Paris probably made me stand out,” he says with a laugh.



Three weeks after that Zoom audition, producers scheduled him to compete at the show's Culver City studio before Thanksgiving. He, Lauran, and daughter Daphne drove to Los Angeles for the taping and the adventure of a lifetime. Eric describes the whole experience as "Surreal." What was the new host Ken Jennings like? "He was friendly, encouraging, and funny!"

When the show aired January 20, on Houston's Channel 13, the IWA community hosted a lively watch party in the Auditorium. While Eric didn't win the match, he was still a champion to the cheering crowd. Following the show, Principal Cathy Stephen moderated a Q&A between Eric and the students. Eric shared his behind-the-scenes experiences and explained how his *Jeopardy!* journey took 15 years of practice and three auditions. He encouraged the students to joyfully pursue their own personal goals. "The keys to success are persistence and belief in yourself," he said. "After all, what's the worst that can happen if you try?" Special thanks to Channel 13 reporter Carolina Olivares for a fun interview of Mr. Kerr-Herally that aired before the game show. Turns out, Ms. Olivares is a 2016 graduate of IWA! ■





FALCON NEWS

FOUR STUDENTS NAMED NATIONAL MERIT COMMENDED SCHOLARS

BELOW, L TO R:

Iman Haddad, Marie Culbreth,
Amelie Dinh, Claire Michael.

Four Incarnate Word Academy seniors were recently named Commended Scholars by the National Merit Scholarship Program: Marie Culbreth, Amelie Dinh, Iman Haddad, and Claire Michael. These Class of 2023 commended students scored in the top 3-4 percent of all national PSAT/NMSQT scores during their junior year. "Commended students are recognized for the exceptional academic promise demonstrated by their outstanding performance on the qualifying tests," said Director of College Counseling Dr. Talia Pennington-Dorsey. "We are so proud of the four young women who are not only great students but outstanding members of our community."

As far as these scholars' favorite subjects go, Marie loves chemistry and plans to study business and theology in college; Amelie plans to major in computer science; Iman enjoyed her English courses and forensic science class at IWA and is exploring a future in environmental law; and Claire loved all her math classes, especially calculus, and will focus on math-related subjects in college. Congratulations, Falcons! ■





FALCON NEWS

ALUMNAE SHARE TIPS FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS

More than 20 alumnae from the classes of 2020, 2021, and 2022 returned to campus on Thursday, January 5, to participate in panel discussions about life after IWA. The alumnae represented colleges with diverse locations, sizes, and environments, such as University of Pennsylvania, Catholic University, Texas A&M, University of St. Thomas, Syracuse, Texas State, and Clemson.

Panelists focused their advice on college life and all that transition entails, such as school choice, self-care, time management, study abroad programs, and staying true to yourself and your values as you take the next step in education.

Tips included ideas to prepare students for college, such as establishing study habits, as well as advice for navigating the first year on campus such as taking advantage of resources like student health, professors' office hours, or ways to make a large college smaller by joining clubs and extracurriculars. The panelists appreciated the academic preparation they received at Incarnate Word, especially in STEM and writing courses. They reminded current students to seek balance in college with interactions that make you happy such as preparing a home-cooked meal or volunteering for a favorite charity.

Thank you to the generous and well-spoken alumnae panelists, our Counselors Dr. Talia Pennington-Dorsey and Amie Gray, as well as Young Leaders Program Director Eric Kerr-Heraly, for organizing and moderating this important event for IWA students. ■



FALCON NEWS

DECEMBER OPEN HOUSE WELCOMES MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS TO IWA

The school's December 4th Open House brought hundreds of future Falcons to campus as prospective students and parents discovered the strengths and joys of an IWA education. The afternoon kicked off with a welcome from President Lauren Beck, Principal Cathy Stephen, and Admissions Director Melody Torno, followed by a Q&A with current Student Council reps and performances by the Choir and Falcon Theatre. Families toured academics, the Young Leaders Program, enjoyed a meet and greet with the deans and alumnae, and explored our sports and student ministry programs. The event wrapped up with a high-energy performance by Impact Dance. ■





FALCON NEWS

IWA ASTROS SPIRIT CAPTURES MEDIA ATTENTION

Students, faculty, and staff arrived on campus at the crack of dawn on Wednesday, October 19, to show support and appreciation for our downtown neighbors, the Houston Astros. IWA's colorful "Chalk the Walk" art has become a seasonal tradition, and we thank Channel 11, Channel 2, and Channel 13 for visiting our campus next to Minute Maid Park and providing TV coverage of our students' Astros spirit. Shout-out to Student Council Advisor Nan Hernandez, who has organized the project over the past few years.

Fia Dehais, Class of 2025, drew a stunning portrait of Astros shortstop Jeremy Pena, who ended up being clutch in a Game 1 victory that night versus the Yankees. Pena went on to win World Series MVP, Golden Glove Award, and Babe Ruth Award. We think Fia not only has an eye for portraits, but as a scout for baseball superstars! ■





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

KAITLYN BOURGEOIS '23:

Sisterhood Ignites Success

Katie Bourgeois uses one word to describe her years at IWA: transformational. “I really didn’t like school before I came to IWA. But today, I can’t even tell you which is my favorite class, every academic department is strong. Now I love history, I love science—and I’ve learned to appreciate math,” she says with a smile.

“Every single teacher here wants to see me succeed and so do my classmates. Students give each other quick pep talks as we walk down the hall before tests. This environment builds confidence, and so you think, ‘I don’t know if I can do this, but I am going to try!’”

One thing she ‘tried’ and flourished at is videography. “I took an elective from Mr. Adams—sort of reluctantly— but he’s such an inspiring teacher that I got hooked and tried to learn as much as I could from him.” Katie started filming videos for her friends’ college applications, and then last fall, she shot a series of six videos for the IWA Advancement Department’s “Giving Tuesday” Campaign. The campaign resulted in record fundraising, and the videos, which she shot, edited, and produced, helped meet the goal.

“Katie is awesome,” says Mr. James Adams, IWA’s Broadcast Journalism instructor. “She’s an outstanding videographer and broadcast student. She learned very quickly, and she creates at a level that only one other student I’ve taught has achieved,” he continues. “Katie understands how to use many shots and different shot combinations to make videos interesting, which most students have trouble with.”

In addition to her videography, Katie is also Executive Officer for Falcon Ambassadors, a member of the Environmental Club and Made4Medicine, and helps teach a Sunday School Class for young children at her church. Her ambition is to become a pediatric nurse. Next fall, she’ll attend Texas A&M majoring in Biology on the Pre-Nursing path. “Nursing is a vocation, and I want to serve others,” she says. “My dream is to help young patients and make a difference in their lives.”■

“
This
environment
builds
confidence.
”





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

DANIELLE BARTHOLET '23: *Plotting a Brilliant Career*

“
Teachers
provide
opportunity
and
mentoring.
”

Senior Danielle Bartholet always considered creative writing a passion, but with the encouragement of her IWA teachers, she's now focused on writing as a profession.

Former IWA English instructor Ms. Xenia Murtaugh, who taught Danielle during sophomore year, urged Danielle to be proactive and submit her writing to competitions and student anthologies.

Those bold efforts paid off! Her poem “Rays of Old” was included in the anthology *Collecting Dust*, curated by popular young adult author Hudson Warm. Last fall, a short story she entered in the Texas Book Festival’s “Fresh Voices” competition won the fiction award in the 12th grade category. The short story is based on Danielle’s young adult novel set during Galveston’s Great Storm of 1900.

The “Fresh Voices” award included participating on a student panel in Austin last November. “I was excited to participate on the panel, network with young writers and meet publishing professionals. The experience was educational and a lot of fun,” she says.

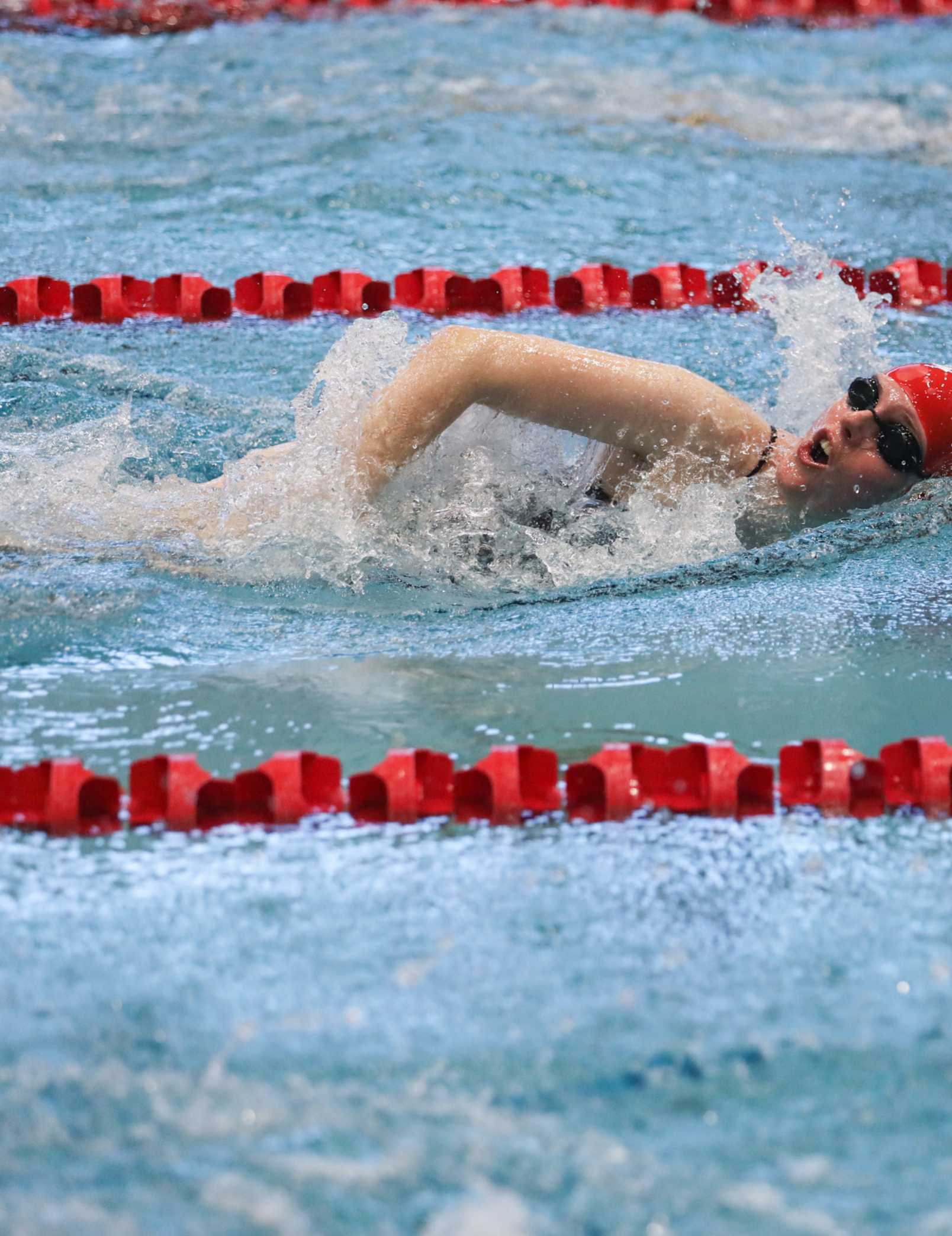
Besides her dedication to creative writing and English classes, she participates in Falcon Theatre, co-leads the Book Sisters Club at IWA, writes for the school’s digital newspaper, and is a Falcon Ambassador. “What I love about IWA is that teachers provide so much opportunity and mentoring. When you have those, you find the courage to do great things.”

“Our school honors its century-old traditions, yet the curriculum is current and connects us to the modern world,” she emphasizes. “We have amazing STEM and Leadership programs that bring in speakers who are tops in their fields. As seniors, the whole class attended the PricewaterhouseCoopers conference and learned how to create an elevator pitch—a skill that’s valuable in any career today.”

One tradition cherished in her family is the Mother-Daughter Mass. Her mother, Dominique Boussac Bartholet, is an alumna from the Class of 1994. “My mother is proud of how the school has evolved, yet still honors the values that always made it great,” says Danielle.

As for college, she’s applying to universities with strong English departments, some located on the East Coast. “Since I’ll be submitting my young adult novel to publishers, I’d like to be near New York,” she explains. Her Galveston-based novel, *On an Island of Broken Hope*, sounds like a page-turner. The story includes a hunt for pirate Jean LaFitte’s lost treasure where teenagers from various backgrounds, elite and poor, collide and collaborate during the infamous Great Storm. “Just like with the Covid-19 pandemic,” she notes, “the storm takes away some things, and yet it makes other things possible.” ■





ATHLETICS

SWIMMING

Talent and consistent effort helped steer the Swim Team to State Competition. Early on, the team competed in the TAPPS Division I East regionals at UH Natatorium and won the 200m Medley Relay with standout performances by Olivia Hill '23, Grace Oggero '24, Bella Garza '25 and Claire Fischbach '25. The same four also qualified in the 400m Free Relay and won 1st place, breaking a school record by 7 seconds, 3:51.16. Claire Fischbach won 1st in the 200 Individual Medley and earned 2nd in the 100m Breaststroke.

As we went to press, six swimmers had qualified for State in 15 events (see below). We are happy to report that the 400-meter relay team won 3rd place. Ursuline Academy of Dallas beat them by less than a second. Ursuline finished with 3:49.29 and IWA came in at 3:49.51.



Olivia Hill: '23

100m Fly

200m Medley Relay

200m Free Relay

400m Free Relay

Grace Oggero '24

200m Medley Relay

400m Free Relay

Claire Fischbach '25

200m Medley Relay

200m Individual Medley

100m Breaststroke

400m Free Relay

Bella Garza '25

200m Medley Relay

200m Free Relay

400m Free Relay

Flinn Burrell '24

200m Free Relay

Elizabeth Hunt '23

200m Free Relay



ATHLETICS VOLLEYBALL SENIOR NIGHT CELEBRATES SPIRIT

The Varsity Volleyball team bid farewell to a great group of seniors at October's Senior Night. From left: Devin Fowler, Sophia Hunt, Claire Michael, Coach Vanessa Toomer, Caroline Stander, Kylie Salch, and Jasmine Valladares.

ATHLETICS

BASKETBALL FINISHES WITH TOURNAMENT SUCCESS

The IWA Basketball team flew through another strong season. Above, the team celebrates a 3rd Place win in the Silver bracket at the Rosehill Christian tournament in November. In December, they won 3rd place at the Fort Bend Christian tournament, beating Duchesne 69-45. Amy Phan '23 scored 37 points and was selected to the all-tournament team.



Below: Cross Country earned 4th at State.



ATHLETICS

IWA ACES A NEW SPORTS TEAM

For the past decade, Athletics Director Rick Perez hoped and prayed that he could bring a tennis team to IWA. Inquiries about the sport were increasing each year, from both current students and prospective families. Finally, with an extra push from Anna Gardner '23, the new era of tennis at IWA arrived.

Anna remembers that she asked about a tennis team when she first toured IWA as a middle-school student. The senior, who lives in north Houston, plays after school and on weekends at Giammalva Racquet Club's academy. After she enrolled at IWA, she kept asking Coach Perez to bring the sport to the 609.

The stars aligned when Anna started a school Tennis Club and the popularity of the sport grew among the students. Last year, she made a presentation and pitch to President Lauren Beck, C.V.I., who agreed the sport would be a valuable addition to the school in its 150th year. Coach Perez and Student Dean Stacey Kornegay created a budget and logistics plan, says Anna. This year, College Counseling Director Dr. Talia Pennington-Dorsey and Social Studies teacher Mr. Joseph Schiller signed on to coach.

The Falcons' inaugural tennis team began practices at MacGregor Park in January. "We love the facility—and it's a quick ride on the bus to get there," says Anna, team captain. "There are several well-maintained courts, and we have the whole back area to ourselves each afternoon. Even as a senior, I've made new friends from other grades who joined the team." Noting the interest from freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, she predicts, "The future looks bright for IWA tennis!" ■





ATHLETICS

IZZY LAVOIE '23

Enjoying the Round

As they say, on the links, Izzy Lavoie is enjoying the round. Since freshman year, she has fully embraced all the opportunities offered at Incarnate Word Academy. Now a senior, Izzy is president of the student body, a TPSMEA All-State Band bassoonist, the Drum Major for St. Thomas High School, and MVP and co-captain of the golf team.

Coach Rick Perez calls Izzy “one of the most school-spirited students on campus.” She not only manages a full calendar of commitments from her own schedule, she makes time to get together to cheer other sports and classmates activities, he adds. None of it seems like a burden to Izzy, she’s just “all in” for IWA.

“I came to IWA from public schools in Pearland. My mom thought it would be a good idea to join a sport to meet people. I hadn’t played golf before but decided to try it,” she explains. She loves the sport and started entering tournaments for fun, sponsored by the South Texas Junior PGA. Everything clicked and IWA has a solid team, competing in division 6A with a chance to make State this year. “I really don’t even think of it as a sport, it’s so much fun. I came from the bottom up. My motto is that if the ball is going forward, it’s going somewhere!”

Inspired by the STEM programs at IWA, she plans to major in civil engineering in college. “My love for math has only grown since I’ve come here,” she says. “Mrs. Douglass, Ms. Laskoski, and Ms. Hernandez are phenomenal and creative teachers. With support from such amazing faculty, I’ve been able to juggle academics, extracurricular activities, and still have time for myself.” ■

ARTS

ABOUT THE PHOTO

"The Addams Family" fall musical met rollicking success as all three performances attracted large crowds of parents, students, and friends of IWA Falcon Theatre.

Judging from the nightly laughter and applause, the audience had as much fun as the talented cast and crew. Photo by Erin Lenahan '23.







ARTS

SHOUT OUT TO IWA ARTISTS

Kudos to this year's Regional Scholastic Awards winners!
Winning artists posing with Mrs. Postel, left to right, include:

Leilani Tamez '25 - Honorable Mention - Sculpture
Annabelle Lofton '24 - Silver Key - Sculpture
 Honorable Mention - Drawing & Illustration
Kathleen Ngo '25 - Gold Key - Drawing & Illustration
 Honorable Mention - Painting
Eleanor Seaton '24 - Honorable Mention - Sculpture

Senior **Danielle Bartholet** won a Gold Key for her poetry submission and a Silver Key for her short story submission.

All Gold Key winners' entries will compete in the national competition. Stay tuned!



ARTS

ON PITCH: CHOIR MEMBERS EARN PRESTIGIOUS HONORS

Everyone who attends school Mass knows that the IWA-Choir, directed by Joshua Wilson, is a talented bunch. Recently they earned regional and state awards from Texas Private School Music Educators.

In November, three IWA Choir members earned state awards: Soprano 2: Katie Dickinson '24 and Alto 2: Clarissa Flores '23 and Flinn Burrell '24.

Being selected for state choir means that they are among the top singers in their section from among all the private schools in the state of Texas. Selected members were invited to participate in the All-State Clinic and Concert. In addition to the state winners, 10 members earned All-Region and were invited to participate in the All-Region Choir Clinic. ■



2023 TPSMEA ALL-REGION MIXED CHOIR MEMBERS:

Soprano 1 | Iman Haddad '23 | Soprano 2 | Katie Dickinson '24 | Alto 2 | Clarissa Flores '23 | Flinn Burrell '24

2023 TPSMEA ALL-REGION TREBLE CHOIR MEMBERS:

Soprano 1 | Zoe Yokubaitis '23 | Courtney Hall '24 | Soprano 2 | Eleanor Seaton '24 | Alto 1 | Reagan Huckle '23 | Alexia Nanquil '24 | Alto 2 | Issa Moore '26



LEADERSHIP

SENIORS LOOK AHEAD TO CAREERS AT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Dressed in business formal attire, the class of 2022 navigated the Downtown Tunnels on their way to PricewaterhouseCoopers for the annual Young Women's Leadership Conference on Wednesday, October 12.

As in past years, a group of women from PwC worked with the students on creating an elevator pitch and gave advice about interviewing and preparing for professional careers. For the past two years, because of COVID restrictions, IWA has hosted the conference on campus, but it was exciting to have the opportunity to return to PwC's facilities this year. After arriving at Wells Fargo Plaza, students took high-speed elevators to the Sky Lobby of one of Houston's tallest buildings. From there they made their way down to PwC's conference rooms where the set-up simulated a professional



conference, with students receiving personalized lanyards, gift bags, and breakfast tacos before the introductory session.

During the opening session, Holly Marrs, a PwC executive who chaired the event, welcomed everyone and shared helpful advice about interviewing. She emphasized the importance of preparing in advance, making a strong first impression, and asking questions at the end of an interview. Students then divided into small breakout groups led by the PwC volunteers who helped them craft and practice elevator pitches. “We tell students in the Young Leaders Program to lean into fear,” said Eric Kerr-Herally, IWA’s Director of Leadership. “Giving an elevator pitch to a total stranger is very intimidating, but our hosts shared with me afterward how impressed they were that our students were so poised and focused.”

The conference closed with a panel of women who discussed their career paths and answered students’ questions. Students asked them a number of thoughtful questions on a variety of topics, including building and maintaining confidence, finding professional internships, and balancing their professional, personal, and family commitments.

“I would say that the biggest takeaway from the conference was learning a bit more about the interview process whether it be for a job or internship,” said Kate Bauman ‘23. “I found it extremely helpful that they broke down the whole process, especially how we can better prepare for the interview. The most exciting part was being there with the entire senior class and being able to experience something not only helpful, but fun as well.” ■

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LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP LIVE PRESENTS SUZAN NGUYEN

Leadership Live, a student-run speaker series that focuses on career, leadership, and life skills, kicked off their 2022-2023 season with author, TED Talk presenter, and motivational coach Suzan Nguyen.

Ms. Nguyen, a Houstonian, has gained national prominence by sharing her story of overcoming adversity to help audiences learn ways to build resilience and hope. In a fast-paced and upbeat presentation, she connected with the students by explaining that feelings of pain are universal, no matter if caused by the death of a loved one, the loss of a friendship, or the struggle with personal conflict. She talked about surviving a car wreck at age 22, which led to her arm being amputated above the elbow. Ms. Nguyen told IWA students that when she first learned she had lost her arm, she was overcome with anger and bitterness. One day, she hit the tipping point and decided to start believing in happiness. Her mantra, “Better, Not Bitter,” was born and led to her writing a book, “One Armed But Not Unarmed.”

Among the many great ideas that she shared with the students included four tips that can help people deal with adversity:

- Instead of regretting the past or thinking about the future, try to live in the present and have gratitude for the people and things that are good in your life.
- If you find yourself repeatedly thinking negative thoughts, call them out. Stop the habit and learn to reframe thoughts, which will retrain your brain.
- Check your environment. Be sure you are spending time with people and activities that bring out the highest version of you.
- Remember that your self-worth is not tied to the clothes you wear, your appearance, or your social circles.

In a lively Q&A with the students, Ms. Nguyen admitted that she still has bad days, but now she’s developed the tools to help her get through difficult times. After she learned to be vulnerable, accept her reality, and share her story and struggles, she says, “the magic started to happen.” ■





LEADERSHIP

LEADING WITH BUSINESS POP-UP MEETS SWEET SUCCESS

Shake It Up, the Leading in Business students' after-school pop-up snack shop, met sweet success. Since launching at the end of October and wrapping up sales in early December, the students have sold 384 shakes, 340 fries, and 229 orders of Flappy's Secret Sauce, the popular student-created condiment. In fact, the sauce was so requested, they sold 54 jars of Flappy's Secret Sauce for the holidays. **Shake It Up's total profits were just over \$800 (with total sales over \$2,800).** All profits will be donated to the Children's Leukemia Research Fund in memory of classmate Lily Gribble. ■



UNIQUELY IWA

Heritage

Incarnate Word Academy, established in 1873, was the first permanent school founded in the City of Houston and the first all-girls high school in Houston. Since opening the doors at 609 Crawford Street 150 years ago, our Catholic high school has educated a diverse body of young women—from all ethnicities and sectors of society—on the same downtown block.

Spirituality

The Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament strive to live with the simplicity and graciousness of Jesus, in steadfast service to children and the poor. They are called to bring the light of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. As Sister Lauren Beck says, “The core of our spirituality is pragmatic versus pie in the sky. We want to elevate all of humanity and help those in need.” True to the mission, Sisters encourage students to live in the world as a loving extension of the Gospel, both in words and in actions.

Leadership

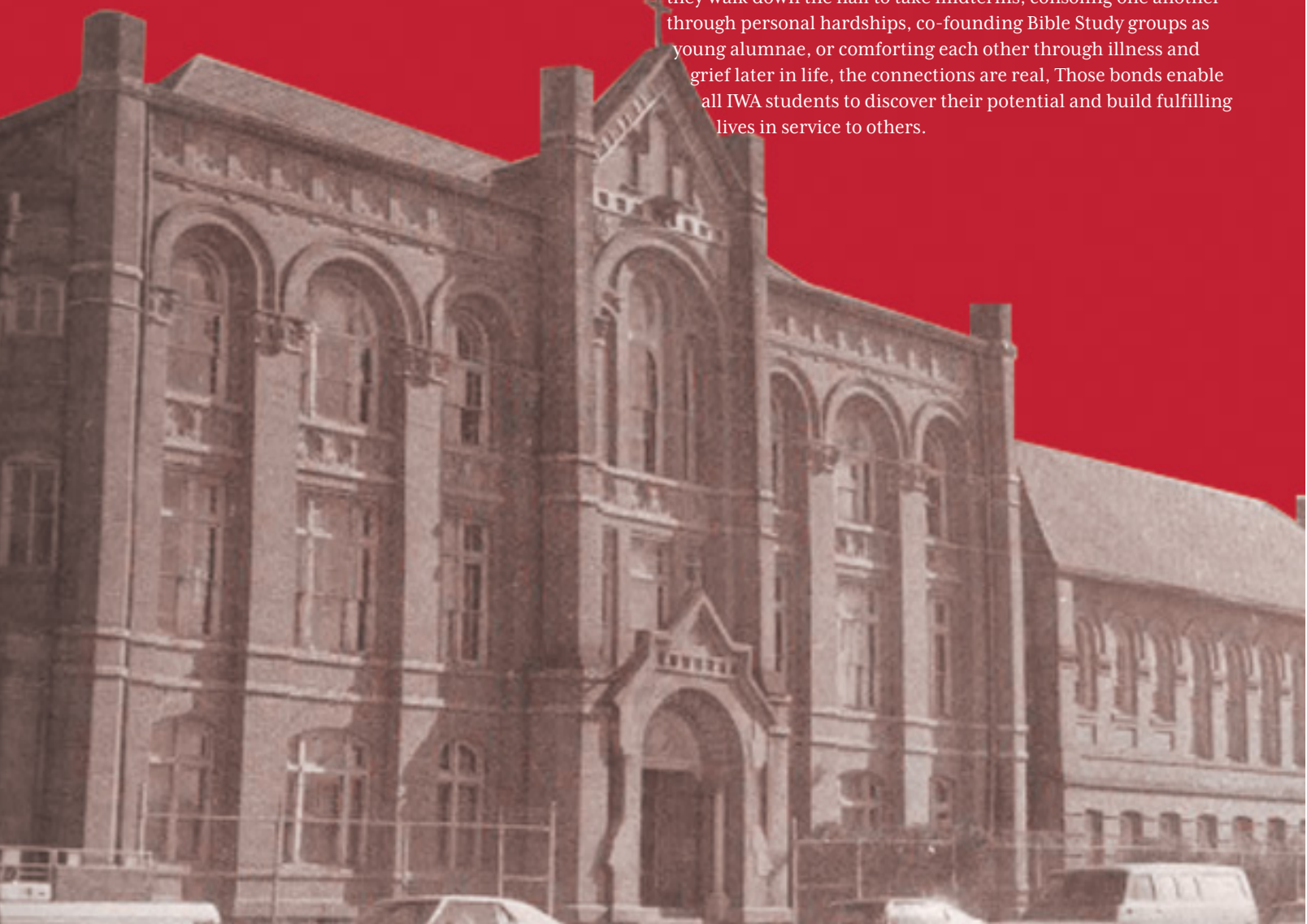
Like the bold young nuns who founded the school in a fledgling city on Buffalo Bayou 150 years ago, IWA has a legacy of forming strong, loving leaders, whether in families, education, or Fortune 500 companies. Today, the school’s renowned Young Leaders Program, which includes project-based classes and co-curricular opportunities, helps form confident communicators and collaborators who are adaptive, innovative, and empathetic.

STEM Programs

More than 50 percent of current IWA graduates go on to major in STEM programs at colleges and universities throughout the United States. Hands-on STEM classes, taught by creative and dynamic teachers, are a reason why. Partnerships with PwC, Microsoft, and Texas Medical Center institutions forge networks with national scientists and innovators. Graduates of IWA are comfortable with technology, adept at problem-solving, and prepared for future jobs in medicine, computer science, engineering, accounting, and more.

Sisterhood

Students and alumnae attest to the authenticity of the IWA sisterhood. Whether encouraging each other with pep talks as they walk down the hall to take midterms, consoling one another through personal hardships, co-founding Bible Study groups as young alumnae, or comforting each other through illness and grief later in life, the connections are real. Those bonds enable all IWA students to discover their potential and build fulfilling lives in service to others.





ALL-STAR TEAM ELEVATES STUDENTS

Students at IWA join a community that fosters sisterhood and offers support in every endeavor. A team of all-star leaders on our downtown campus supports students in their academic, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual lives. Together, the team's goal is to ensure a successful high school experience that provides students with a strong foundation for college, careers, and meaningful lives. From left, standing: Dean of Academics Christine Shively, Counselor Amie Gray, Dean of Students Stacey Kornegay, Principal Cathy Stephen, Athletics Director Rick Perez. From left, sitting: Director of Student Ministry Brianna Amaya and Director of College Counseling Dr. Talia Pennington-Dorsey. Not pictured: Young Leaders Program Director Eric Kerr-Herally. ■



ALUMNAE CLASS NOTES

Carolina Olivares Makes the News

Carolina Olivares '16 recently joined KTRK ABC13 as a streaming producer/reporter. She is a 2019 graduate of Texas Christian University, where she received several awards as a "Distinguished Journalism Student." Carolina is excited to be back in Houston, reporting on all the exciting news, people, and events in her hometown. (01)

Mary Donna Mocerì Joins Ziggy's

Mary Donna Mocerì graduated in 1976 and has been in the hospitality industry since 1982. Her present position is sales, catering and development with Kenny and Ziggy's New York Style Delicatessen Restaurant and Bakery, owned by the renowned Ziggy Gruber, a 5th generation deli man. Mary Donna is a member of the Gamma Sigma Delta Gamma Chapter of the University of Houston and the Houston Northwest Delta Gamma Alumnae Chapter. She attended the University of Houston and graduated with an Associates of Arts Degree from Lone Star College. (02)

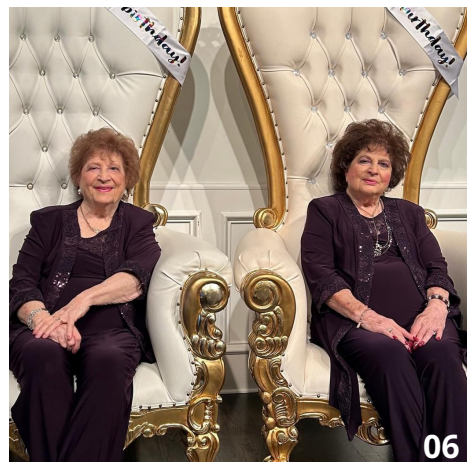
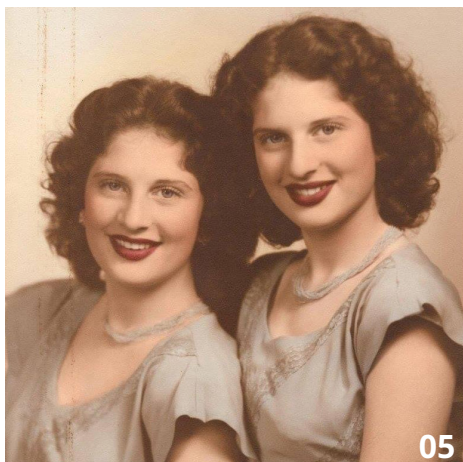
A Falcon and Eagle Find Love

Eden Caligur '17 and Drake Bennett, St. Thomas High School Class of 2017 got engaged in November 2023. (03)

Turning 90—Twice!

Mary Lou Vento Gentempo and Theresa Ann Vento Gentempo are identical twins who graduated from IWA in 1951. Recently, they celebrated their 90th birthdays. Throughout their lives, the twins have shared similarities beyond their appearance. After graduating from IWA, the twins married two brothers from New Jersey whom they met at Ellington Air Force Base. Mary Lou married Edward Gentempo and Theresa Ann married John Gentempo. Mary Lou and Edward had 8 children, and Theresa Ann and John had 5 children. At age 90, the twins are blessed with good health. Their secrets: a loving family and lots of prayer! (04,05,06)

Pictures from email from daughter Mary Walden.



Class of 1962 Holds 60th Reunion

The Class of 1962 celebrated their 60th Reunion on Saturday, June 11, 2022, at the Westin Oaks Galleria Hotel. The evening included a photo tribute to their 25 deceased classmates.

The group in attendance includes: Back Row, L to R
Teresa Ramirez, Felicia Caporino Cox, Barbara Kominczak
Rybarski, Mary Ann Kocurek Thompson, Roseanne Sedita
Jensen, Maria Villagomez Buzek, Christine Micklitz Womack,
Lillian Cegielski Kozel, Loretta Prazak Kasowski, O'Reen
Fires Johnson, Teresa Medina Martinez, Claudia Kurtin
Banks, and Peggy Schulin.

Sitting, L to R: Frances Reed (Barbara Kominczak's sister)
Marilyn Winberly Porter, Cynthia Beam Higginbotham, Mary
Ellen Altenburger, and Janet Hamala Huber.

Front, L to R: Lena Schuttee Tomasino, Judy Carrabba Sand-
ers, Elizabeth Barrett White, and Loretta DeGeorge Kirkpat-
rick.(07)



Calling the Class of 1963

Your classmates Pat Ponthier, Elizabeth Muegge, and others want you to join them at the 2023 IWA Alumnae event (TBA later) to celebrate your 60th class reunion. If your contact information has changed since your 50th reunion, please send your current information to the IWA Alumnae Relations Office at alumnae@incarnateword.org or to PatPonthier@hotmail.com or LizMuegge@yahoo.com.

IN MEMORIAM:

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Marguerite Thacker Burrows '53

Kayla Cage '09

Florence Click '51

Martha Krippner Daumas '50

Betty Ann Kowis '53

Elizabeth Bielamowicz Krusleski '61

Cecelia V. Lockridge '71

Harry Mach - Husband of Cora Sue Dominy Mach '60

Carmen Nadolney '55

William Slick, Jr. - Benefactor

Vera Barbosa Stowell '45

Joan Koh Thoede '50

Bernice Tristan-Mother of Teresa Jimenez '87

Frances Laperna Wilson '50

Connie Helen Wright '58





ALUMNAE FOCUS

EDEN CALIGUR '17

Downtown Girl

ncarnate Word Academy impacted Eden Caligur's life in such positive ways—from giving her a head start in college, inspiring her career choice, and instilling values and spirituality that guide her in her job and her personal life—that she's determined to give back tenfold.

"Now that I have graduated from college and work downtown, I want to support IWA in any way they need me," she promises. The 2017 alumna co-chairs this year's Gala Wine Pull with Kaylee Kieschnick '17, on April 14, and hopes to lend a hand with Admissions and Alumnae events when her schedule permits.

After graduating from the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville in 2021, Eden started working for Savills Houston, a commercial real estate firm located a couple of blocks from IWA on Main Street. In December 2022, she completed the company's 15-month rotational Junior Broker Program and now specializes in office leasing.

"I grew up in the suburbs of Sugar Land," says Eden, "and when I started school at IWA, the architecture and energy in downtown enthralled me." Some of her fondest memories include driving into Houston's Oz-like business district each morning with her father, and then walking to his office after school to study or do homework. "Being there helped me feel confident in the corporate environment."

Her favorite class at IWA was Leading with Business. "We launched a smoothie business called Smoothie Queen, and we were taught how to create a business plan, market our product, and read a profit and loss report—all while having fun."

In college, she parlayed her IWA experience to major in Finance/Real Estate with a minor in marketing. "I was beyond prepared for my college classes. Unlike some of my peers, I had learned time management skills and how to be a self-starter in high school," she says. "The IWA teachers were so adept, they challenged us but didn't hover. And they asked smart questions, so they always knew when we hadn't read the chapter before class."

When she graduated and left Fayetteville, Eden knew where she was headed—back to downtown Houston. Besides launching her career in commercial real estate, she hosts a Bible study with three of her IWA classmates that has grown to include 20 young Houston women. Eden is also engaged to marry Drake Bennett, St. Thomas High School Class of 2017 alumni, in November 2023.

"IWA taught me that you are never alone," says Eden. "God is always with you, and the incredible bond of sisterhood that IWA provides is always with you. Having this level of support empowers young women to do amazing things. Another lesson I learned was how to be a servant leader," she adds. "I've observed many inwardly focused people in business. But the happiest and most successful people are those who help a neighbor by taking something off their plate and those who bring not only expertise, but kindness, to the workplace and life. That's the IWA definition of a servant leader." ■

Making History Since

Incarnate Word Academy kicks off a year-long celebration of its 150th Anniversary at the Gala and Auction on April 14, 2023. To help commemorate the school's unique history and traditions, we are asking Alumnae to contact us with any stories, photos, uniforms, or memorabilia that we can display at upcoming events. Please email alumnae@incarnateword.org, if you have items or memories to share.

1873







ADVANCEMENT NEWS

JOSE ALTUVE BRINGS THE SPIRIT OF A CHAMPION TO IWA FUNDRAISING DINNER

In November, right after celebrating a second World Series for the Astros in a citywide parade, Astros phenom and future Hall of Famer Jose Altuve and his wife, Nina, graciously headlined a fundraising dinner for IWA. This is the third year that the Altuves have supported the school with star billing at a fundraising event. The dinner was hosted by Patrick and Sandra O'Donnell.



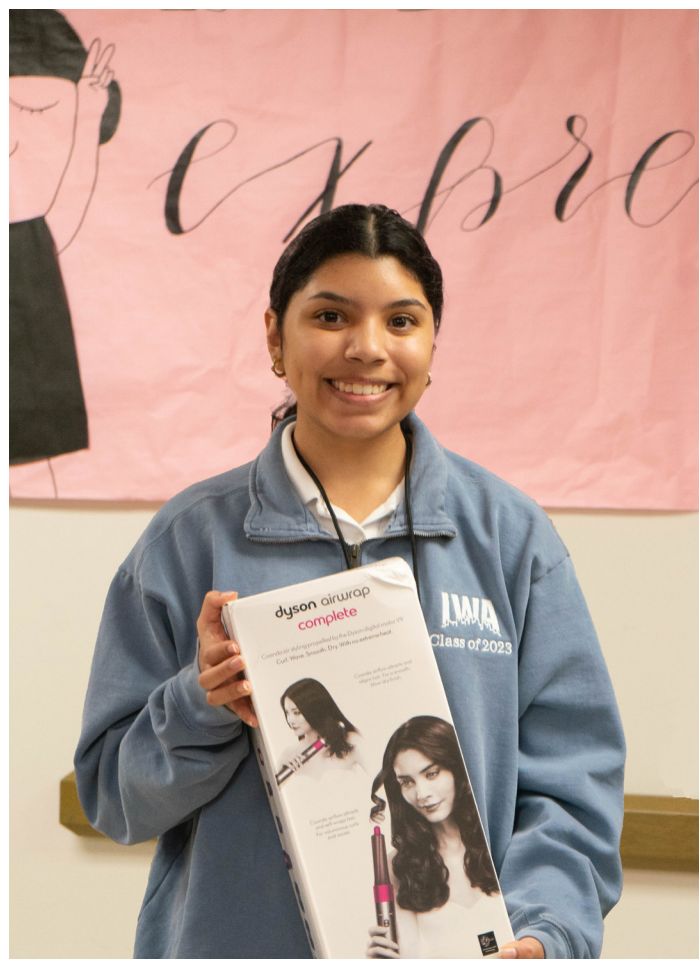


ADVANCEMENT NEWS

2022 FALCON RAFFLE

Raffle sales hit historic highs! The students and faculty worked hard all semester to sell their stretch goal of \$200,000 in sales. Together, they met the goal, and the school earned a Raffle Holiday on January 17, 2023!

Rachel Sanchez '23 was announced as the Week 5 Top Seller and won a Dyson Airwrap. The Overall Top Selling Student was Olivia Hill '23, who sold \$10,545 in tickets and won an amazing Rodeo Package. Congratulations to all the top sellers for a job well done! Go Falcons!



GIVING TUESDAY

Two hands, one from a person with dark skin and one from a person with light skin, are positioned to form a heart shape with their fingers. The hands are centered in the upper half of the image, with the fingers pointing towards the center to create the heart's outline. The background is a solid, vibrant red.

TOGETHER, WE GIVE

The school launched a Giving Tuesday fundraising campaign in November titled “Together, We Give.” And together, the school responded in strong numbers to raise donations for scholarship programs at IWA. The campaign's videos, filmed and produced by Katie Bourgeois '23, featured five seniors, Anna Galan, Claire Michael, Claire McTaggart, Izzy Lavoie, and Jorri Odom, who spoke from their hearts about the faculty, fellowship, and joy they experience each day at IWA. The students shared how the wisdom, values, and virtues they've developed here have transformed their lives and prepared them for exciting futures.



GOLFERS TEE UP FOR IWA

The Saint Maximilian Kolbe Catholic Community's Knights of Columbus visited campus to donate a generous check for \$500 to IWA. The Knights raise funds in their annual Golf Tourney, and each year they choose a variety of Catholic-related organizations to support. Thank you, Council #10720! ■



FATHER-DAUGHTER MASS

The Father-Daughter Mass in December filled the school hallways with love and respect.

From the Mothers' Club volunteers who set up the reception to the fathers who attended Mass, to the faculty and staff greeting parents, there were good vibes all around. Thank you Fr. John Huber, CSB, for celebrating with us and sharing an inspiring homily.





MOTHER-DAUGHTER MASS

We can't think of a better way to celebrate the new semester than with the annual Mother-Daughter Mass and Reception at IWA. The smiles on the faces of mothers and their daughters say it all!

As celebrant Fr. Houston Okonma reminded us, every day we should seek God's guidance to help strengthen relationships based on trust and understanding.





2021-2022 SNAPSHOT

During the fiscal year 2021-2022, our revenue from tuition and fees represented **75%** of our total revenue. The cost to educate each student is **\$21,100** while **tuition was \$16,450**. The difference is made up through fundraising and the generosity of donors.

REVENUES

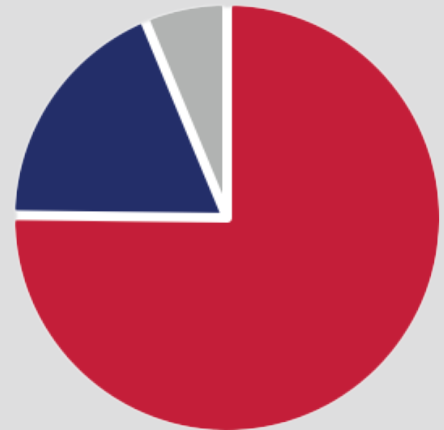
Tuition and Fees (75%)	\$	4,869,675
Support for the Academy (19%)		
Annual Fund	\$	400,000
Spring Gala	\$	450,000
Raffle	\$	120,000
Scholarships	\$	148,000
Donations	\$	81,000
Other Income (6%)	\$	407,618
Total	\$	6,476,293

EXPENSES

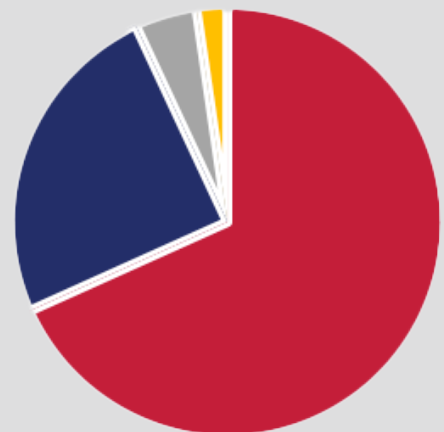
Salaries and Benefits (68%)	\$	4,781,200
Education Expenses (25%)	\$	1,735,346
Administrative Expense (5%)	\$	325,415
Fundraising Expenses (2%)	\$	161,175
Total	\$	7,003,136

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Scholarship Fund	\$	3,101,568
Named Scholarships	\$	3,120,494
<i>Sr. Brendan O'Donnell Scholarship</i>		
<i>Knight-Powell Scholarship</i>		
<i>Most Rev. John McCarthy Scholarship</i>		
<i>Most Rev. Vincent Rizzotto Scholarship</i>		
<i>Most Rev. George Sheltz Scholarship</i>		
<i>Bernice Stansy Purcell Scholarship</i>		
<i>Gil and Chris Dieteman Scholarship</i>		
<i>Sister Brigid Cummins Scholarship</i>		
<i>Guokas Girls' Scholarship</i>		
<i>Perry Dean Thomas Scholarship</i>		
<i>Patricia Dossman Kubin '50 Scholarship</i>		
<i>Richard Adkins Scholarship</i>		
<i>Hugh Rafferty Scholarship</i>		
<i>Joseph Cahill Scholarship</i>		
Total	\$	6,222,062



- Tuition and Fees (75%)
- Support for the Academy (19%)
- Other Income (6%)



- Salaries and Benefits (68%)
- Education (25%)
- Administrative (5%)
- Fundraising (2%)



ANNUAL REPORT

Throughout our long history, Incarnate Word Academy has been blessed to have the support of many generous benefactors including the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, foundations, board members, alumnae, families, faculty, staff, and friends. Each individual gift not only supports the present, but also ensures that the traditions and values of Incarnate Word Academy will continue for generations to come. We are so thankful for these gifts and proud to recognize the donors whose names are listed on the following pages. The following donors contributed to the Academy between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

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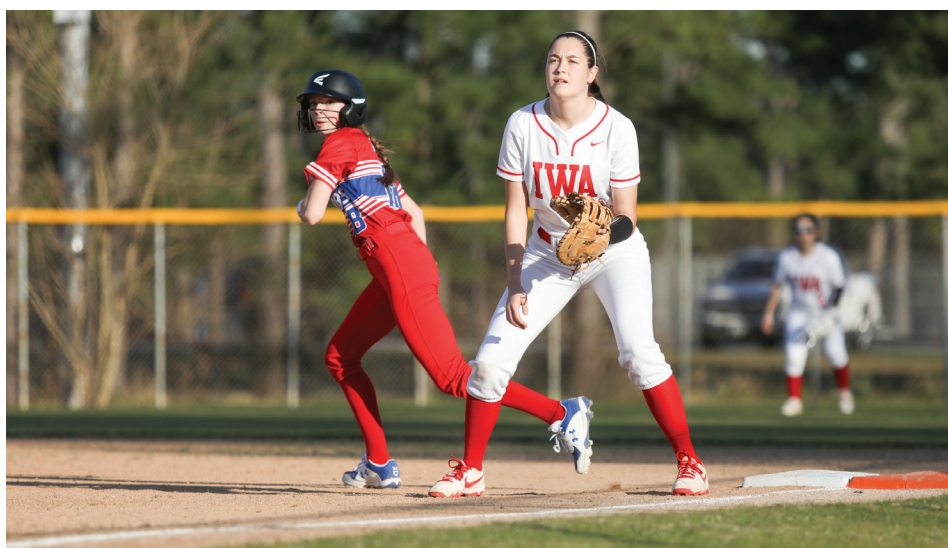


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